

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached sheets of drawings (replacement sheet and annotated sheet showing changes) includes changes to Fig. 1. This sheet, which includes Figs. 1 and 2, replaces the original sheet including those same Figures.

Description of Change to Figure

As filed, number 108 refers to two both a drum 108 and an opening portion 108. As amended, Fig. 1 labels the drum as element 110 and retains 108 to label the opening part.

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Art Unit 3677
Amendment dated October 3, 2005

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REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the very thorough consideration given the present application.

Claims 1-11 are now present in this application. Claim 1 is independent.

Amendments have been made to the Title and specification, and claims 1, 4, 10 and 11 have been amended. No new matter is involved.

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Priority Under 35 U.S.C. § 119

Applicants thank the Examiner for acknowledging Applicants' claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119, and receipt of the certified priority document.

Drawing Changes

Upon reviewing the drawings, Applicants realized that in Fig. 1, numeral 108 is used to label two separate elements of that figure. Accordingly, Applicants submit concurrently herewith Proposed Drawing Corrections for the Examiner's approval, which addresses this error. Accordingly, consideration and approval of these proposed drawing corrections are respectfully requested.

Title of the Invention

Applicants have amended the Title of the Invention in order to correct a mis-spelled word.

Specification Objection

The Examiner has objected to the specification because of a single informality. Applicants also found one typographical error and another similar informality. Applicants have amended the specification in order to correct both similar deficiencies and the typographical error. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this objection are respectfully requested.

Claim Objections

The Examiner has objected to claims 4 and 10 because of informalities. In order to overcome this objection, Applicants have amended claims 4 and 10 to correct the deficiencies pointed out by the Examiner. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this objection are respectfully requested.

Other Claim Amendments

Claim 1 has been amended to correct a misspelled word, and claim 11 has been amended to recite the welding and riveting features in structural terms.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,483,756 to Heyder. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Anticipation under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) requires that "each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." *Verdegaal Bros., Inc. v. Union Oil Co.*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 U.S.P.Q.2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987).

If the prior art reference does not expressly set forth a particular element of the claim, that reference still may anticipate if that element is "inherent" in its disclosure. To establish inherency, the extrinsic evidence "must make clear that the missing descriptive matter is necessarily present in the thing described in the reference, and that it would be so recognized by persons of ordinary skill." *Continental Can Co. v. Monsanto Co.*, 948 F.2d 1264, 1268, 20 USPQ2d 1746, 1749 (Fed. Cir. 1991). "Inherency, however, may not be established by probabilities or possibilities. The mere fact that a certain thing may result from a given set of circumstances is not sufficient." *Id.* at 1269, 20 USPQ2d at 1749 (quoting *In re Oelrich*, 666 F.2d 578, 581, 212 USPQ 323, 326 (C.C.P.A. 1981).

The Office Action contends that Heyder's "rear hinge portion, shown in Fig. 3," is "installed between the rear of a case (2) and a rear of a drum (8) such that the rear of the drum swings in vertical and horizontal directions."

Applicants respectfully disagree with this statement for a number of reasons.

Heyder does not explicitly mention any hinge, let alone a hinge that is installed such that the rear of the drum swings in vertical and horizontal directions. Because of this, the Office Action has to provide objective factual evidence that Heyder inherently discloses that the rear of the drum swings in vertical and horizontal directions, in order to make out a *prima facie* case of anticipation of the claimed invention by Heyder.

Unfortunately, the Office Action falls short of doing this because it never explains why Heyder's rear bearing portion, shown in Fig. 3, is installed between the rear of a case (2) and a rear of a drum (8) such that the rear of the drum swings in vertical and horizontal directions.

All that Heyder explicitly states, in col. 1, lines 37-47, is that its invention ". . . provides a bearing for the clothes dryer that compensates for a tolerance-dictated difference in height between front and rear bearings in such a way that canting of the rear bearing is no longer possible." Heyder also explicitly states, in col. 2, lines 46-47, that "[T]he embodiments of the drum bearing according to the invention avoid canting in the bearing." Also, in col. 1, lines 63-64, Heyder explicitly states that canting that causes wear can be avoided. Conventional dictionary definitions of "canting" include "leaning to one side" and "set at an angle."

In other words, Heyder explicitly discloses that its bearing does not permit the dryer drum to which it is attached to swing in vertical and horizontal directions. Rather, it just lets the drum rotate on its axis.

Applicants respectfully submit that this conclusion is supported by an inspection of Fig. 3, on which the rejection relies. Fig. 3 shows ball bearing 5 pressed against a hollow support element, that contains no numerical label, but which appears to be integrally formed with fastening part or

pin guide 22, and through which the “stationary bearing journal 3” appears to be threadingly extended. That unlabeled support element appears to cooperate with “stationary” bearing journal 3 and hex nut 4 to keep ball bearing 5 from permitting the drum to swing in vertical and horizontal directions.

Heyder never describes his invention as a hinge. Instead, Heyder describes his invention as a bearing journal that has a bearing shell “tightly embracing the spherical surface” of the bearing – see the abstract and col. 1, lines 55-58.

Furthermore, with respect to claim 2, Heyder does not appear to disclose a ball bearing inserted at the housing and swinging in vertical and horizontal directions.

Furthermore, with respect to claim 7, Heyder does not appear to have a base nut provided at an inner surface of the case. The only nut disclosed in Heyder is hex nut 4, which is provided at an outer surface of the case. The unlabeled element between hex nut 4 and ball bearing 5 may be a coupling, but is not a nut.

Furthermore, with respect to claim 8, a disc shape is a thin circular or round flat plate shape, and the unlabeled element, e.g., coupling, between hex nut 4 and ball bearing 5 most certainly does not have a thin circular or round flat plate type shape. Nor is the single fastening part or contact pin guide 22 a plurality of engaging portions formed at a certain interval in a circumferential direction of the base nut.

Furthermore, with respect to claim 10, element 23 in Heyder is a contact pin, to establish galvanic contact with housing parts – see col. 4, lines 1-17, and not to stop any stopping protrusion, a feature which is also not disclosed by Heyder. In this regard, element 22 in Heyder

is not a stopping protrusion. Rather, it is merely an electrical contact pin guide, as disclosed in col. 4, lines 11-17.

Accordingly, the Office Action fails to make out a *prima facie* case of anticipation of claims 1-11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) by Heyder.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection of claims 1-11 is respectfully requested.

Additional Cited References

Because the remaining references cited by the Examiner have not been utilized to reject the claims, but have merely been cited to show the state of the art, no comment need be made with respect thereto.

CONCLUSION

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone Robert J. Webster, Registration No. 46,472, at (703) 205-8000, in the Washington, D.C. area.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

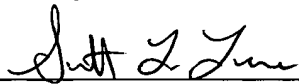
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If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: October 3, 2005

Respectfully submitted,

By 
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Attachments: Replacement Drawing Sheet
Annotated Drawing Sheet

